

Forever and Ever

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Rating:	Teen And Up Audiences
Archive Warning:	No Archive Warnings Apply
Category:	F/F
Fandom:	Kill la Kill (Anime & Manga)
Relationship:	Jakuzure Nonon/Kiryuuin Satsuki
Characters:	Jakuzure Nonon , Kiryuuin Satsuki , Sanageyama Uzu , Inumuta Houka , Gamagoori Ira
Additional Tags:	Femslash February , Femslash February 2024 , Pre-Canon , Worry , Having Faith , Tears , Implied/Referenced Abuse , Injury
Language:	English
Series:	Part 7 of Femslash February 2024
Stats:	Published: 2024-02-11 Words: 1,084 Chapters: 1/1

Forever and Ever

by [KibaSniper](#)

Summary

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The hour hand was closing in on midnight. Nonon was almost thankful Inumuta's grating typing was louder than the clock's ticking. Her blood simmered, preferable to the prior chill in her veins. She threaded her fingers through her hair, stopping when Inumuta's fingers ceased their rapid-fire movement.

Satsuki has been called in by her mother. Nonon waits, unaware that the depths of her sorrow are cracking her heart.

Notes

day 7: come back soon

Once again, Satsuki was gone for the evening.

She had reported to her Elite Four that her mother requested her presence at the Kiryuin Conglomerate. She hadn't spared the details, as the correspondence carried only the order. If Satsuki had known, then the information would've been provided to them well before they saw Satsuki depart for the chopper waiting on the academy's roof. Naturally, they watched her leave until the helicopter was a mere speck obscured by clouds.

Nonon crossed her legs in the Student Council's private office. She pressed her palm to her chin, and her gaze was fixed on the closed door. The room was dimly lit, and the others rarely raised a word. Gamagori's eyes were closed as he stood guard by Satsuki's desk. Sanageyama clutched his kendo sword, occasionally peering out to the courtyard. Only Inumuta's persistent typing, the feverish clicks on his keyboard, rattled the walls.

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"Anything?" Sanageyama swiftly asked Inumuta, breaking the silence like shattering glass.

He sighed. "No. I'm unable to breach their security system. Whatever's happening, we'll just have to be patient."

Gamagori huffed his frustration through his teeth. "Try harder. We haven't heard from Satsuki-sama since homeroom. She's never gone this long without passing a message directly to us or relaying it to Soroi."

Nonon swung her legs and leaped upright. She marched over to Inumuta, bobbing her head in agreement. "The big guy's right, but this is Satsuki-sama. She'll survive anything thrown at her," she proclaimed, peering at the door. "Her castle won't fall."

Inumuta drummed his fingers on the keys. "I don't need the reminder. I'll try all night long to—"

Clack.

They jolted. The Four Kings immediately stared at the entrance. Again, the noise reverberated in the hallway. *Clack, clack, clack.* Steady footsteps approached. Already knowing the identity of the overwhelming presence approaching, they readied themselves, though Nonon's heart flipped.

Gamagori raced to the door. He wrenched it open, the knob slamming into the wall and creating a hole. Nonon clicked her tongue at him, but she hardly cared. Everyone was observing the shadow stretching across the floor, signifying her arrival.

And then, Satsuki stepped into the doorway, her sword used like a cane.

“Satsuki-sama!”

Their collective shout rang as they sprung toward her, but Satsuki raised her hand. Instantly, they fell in line, arms straight by their sides. Although they remained quiet, Nonon knew the boys were like her. They scoured Satsuki’s body, observing every firm, ironed stitch of Junketsu clinging to Satsuki’s body like a second skin.

But despite the high collar, Nonon pressed her mouth into a thin line. They saw the deep violet bruise marring Satsuki’s neck. It bled toward her jaw in the shape of a hand. Nonon’s blood boiled over, her fingernails cutting into her palms. Although she had mocked Sanageyama for acting like a monkey, she was certain her face resembled an incensed mandrill.

“Satsuki-sama,” Sanageyama began, a rare tremble in his tone, “what happened?”

“Your Kamui,” Inumuta noted. “It seems different.”

Satsuki touched her injury. While it looked tender and sore, she hardly reacted when it visibly pulsed.

“I was called to return Junketsu. Ragyo wanted modifications added by the Grand Couturier, and I was refitted. I was almost rejected, and Ragyo tried tearing it off me, claiming I was unworthy, but-” Satsuki clenched her fist, leering at the sleek, spotless Kamui. “-I thrived. In the end, I was victorious. I control Junketsu once more. Clothing will never command me.”

Her declaration speared through Nonon as another reminder of her bravery. Again, she stood atop her tower. She was their definitive focal point, a guiding light. Regardless of the agonies she endured, Satsuki refused to waver. She disallowed her luminance to dim in the face of pure darkness.

Nonon still wondered, as her eyes welled and nose tingled, why that monster clutched her daughter’s throat. She never doubted Satsuki, clinging to her every word, but the thought of her prevalent suffering and the hours spent not knowing, forced her teeth to chatter. The subtle shift in her expression was enough for her to sniffle, pulling everyone toward her.

Gamagori’s tone was surprisingly gentle but accusatory. “Are you weeping? In front of Satsuki-sama?”

Sucking in a sharp breath, Nonon dragged her hands over her eyes. Her apology spilled like tap water from a faucet, swift and efficient. She dug in her heels and cursed herself for her weakness, for not being who Satsuki needed.

“Nonon.”

She immediately followed Satsuki’s voice. She was in front of her, appearing alive and well. Despite her wound, she lowered the hand that massaged it, and she placed it upon Nonon’s

shoulder. Nonon wanted to kiss each of her fingers, but she settled for giving Satsuki her undivided attention.

She spoke in a voice used only for her, a voice only used when they were alone. Nonon wondered what the boys perceived as they listened to such a contemplative tone that was likened to a murmur.

“If I allowed this to deter me, then I might as well hand victory to Ragyo on a silver platter,” Satsuki said softly. “This is but one more necessary pain in our noble quest to destroy the Life Fibers. You mustn’t allow this to harm you, either.”

She withdrew her hand, remarking as the Student Council President.

“Otherwise, you won’t be able to contend with the promise you vowed to me. I’m still holding you to it.”

For a moment, they were surrounded by sand billowing in the wind. Above everyone, Satsuki, a mere child, stood tall and powerful, towering over the adults. Nonon felt between ages, a kindergartner and a high school student all the same, before clutching Satsuki’s hand. She squeezed, the strength of Satsuki’s palm rushing through her, and she replied with the same veracity.

“Forgive me, Satsuki-sama. I’ll refortify the skyscraper in my heart.”

Satsuki nodded, a curt gesture. Nonon released her hand, and Satsuki addressed them as a group. As they discussed their plans, Nonon reestablished the concrete for her tower.

I’ll hold your hand. Forever and ever, I’ll hold your hand.

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